

The Lords of the Congregation.

from a summons to appear before the bishops at Edinburgh ; but, in view of the rally of his adherents, they thought better of it, and did not give him the benefit of a formal onslaught in public court. Letters from his congregation at Geneva urging his immediate return put a period to his "mission for the present." The bishops again summoned him before them *in absentia*, and had his effigy burned at the cross of Edinburgh. His mission produced important results, however. The preachers waxed more aggressive, the people more restive. The image of St Giles was seized and thrown into the North Loch of Edinburgh. Still more ominous, the leading Protestant nobles and gentlemen entered into a bond or covenant, in December 1557, "to renounce the congregation of Satan, and establish the congregation of Christ," and summoned Knox to return. "The Lords of the Congregation," as the subscribers of this bond were called, shortly after presented a petition to the regent, claiming the right to read and expound the Scriptures in the common tongue, the celebration of the Lord's Supper in both kinds, and a thorough reformation of the Church in accordance with the New Testament and the writings of the Fathers. The regent was compelled by political considerations to promise toleration pending the meeting of Parliament. She was only biding her time, however, and the burning of Walter Mill in the following April (1558) shows that the bishops were determined to forestall compromise. In the same month the young queen was married to the Dauphin. The Franco-Scottish alliance seemed assured, and with it should be assured the supremacy of the old Church from all further attack. The regent accordingly summoned the preachers to Edinburgh. They obeyed the citation (July 1558), but they came with such a following that she was forced to abandon extreme measures against them in the meantime.

The language of their adherents was that of men who would no longer quietly suffer her to use her authority to their detriment. "Madame," said their spokesman, James Chalmers of Gaitgyrth, "we know that this is the malice and devise of thei Jefwellis [jail-birds], and of that Bastard (meanynge the Bischope of Sanctandros), that standis by yow. We avow to God we shall maik ane day of it. Thei oppresse